

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 27-31 were objected to as being numbered incorrectly. As shown above, claims 27-31 have been renumbered to claims 29-33, and the dependent claims have been amended to reflect the renumbering.

Currently, claims 12-21 and 29-33, including independent claims 12 and 29, are pending in the present application, as renumbered and shown above. Generally, the claims are directed toward a system for perforating a web comprising a web conveying means adapted for supporting and conveying a web, a frame, and at least three lasers mounted upon the frame, wherein the plurality of lasers are adapted for directing a beam of light upon the surface of the running web to form severed portions that form a perforation in the cross direction of the web. The lasers provide light beams upon the web at an angle that deviates from the cross direction, but results in a severed portion that is oriented in the cross direction.

In the office action, claims 12-14, 18-21 and 29-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,672,168 issued to Saunders, et al. Additionally, claims 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being obvious in view of Saunders, et al. Saunders, et al. is directed toward an apparatus for forming plural rows of holes in a web of sheet material being advanced longitudinally along a unidirectional path of travel, the apparatus including a continuous wave laser and beam delivery apparatus. See Abstract. However, Saunders, et al. does not disclose that the lasers are adapted for directing a beam of light upon the surface of the running web to form severed portions that form a perforation in the cross direction of the web, wherein the lasers provide light beams upon the web at an angle that deviates from the cross direction, but results in a severed portion that is oriented in the cross direction, as required by claims 12 and 29. Because the web is moving at a high speed, the laser usually must be directed at an angle to effect a perforation line across the web which becomes approximately perpendicular to the web in the cross direction. Application, Page 7, ll. 19-23. As such, Applicants believe that the pending claims are not anticipated by Saunders, et al.

Furthermore, Applicants believe that it would not be obvious to modify Saunders, et al. in order to provide lasers adapted at an angle for directing a beam of light upon the surface of the running web that form a perforation in the cross direction of the web. There

is no motivation, suggestion, or incentive to modify Saunders, et al. as such. Sanders, et al. is directed to a making perforations in cigarette paper intended to control the delivery to the smoker of the cigarette smoke constituents by permitting are to be drawn in from the surrounding atmosphere to mix with the smoke during its passage through the filter structure. Col. 1, ll. 24-28. Nowhere in the disclosure does Saunders, et al. suggest that the lasers provide light beams upon the web at an angle that deviates from the cross direction, but results in a severed portion that is oriented in the cross direction.

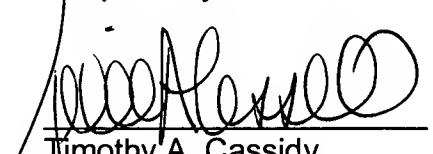
Also, Applicants do not believe that Saunders, et al. renders claims 15-17 obvious because Saunders, et al. does not disclose the speed of travel of the web upon the conveying means. Applicants submit that at the speeds required in claims 15-17, the apparatus disclosed in Saunders, et al. would not be effective because of the many moving parts included in the Saunders, et al. apparatus. Thus, Applicants submit that the present invention is not obvious in view of Saunders, et al.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the presently pending claims patentably define over the prior art of record and are in complete condition for allowance. Should any issues remain after consideration of this response, however, then Examiner Tawfik is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned at his convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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